

# KCDHH

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



## STAFF ACTIVITIES

October 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005

### EQUIPLINK



### TELELINK



Submitted

### DEAFLINK



by

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### ACCESS CENTER



**KCDHH Highlights for the Second Quarter  
October 1 through December 31, 2005  
FY 2005-2006**

***Administration***

KCDHH staff edited the Agency Technical Manual which specifies in-house office procedures to ensure continuity of work. The manual is now complete and will be a valuable document for years to come.

A clean-up day was scheduled for December 22, 2005 to catch up on filing, purging of drafts and non-official documents that are no longer needed, emails, etc. This is an annual event at KCDHH and helps keep KCDHH organized.

***Legislation***

In-house meetings were held to determine who to approach as sponsors of the two pieces of legislation KCDHH will have during the 2006 General Assembly. Senator Tom Buford was decided for the TDD Distribution Program name change bill and Representative Susan Westrom (with hopefully a republican co-sponsor to make this a bipartisan bill) was decided for the TDD Distribution Program funding increase. Having two separate bills will prevent the name change from being defeated if there is opposition to the funding increase.

***Personnel***

Ms. Posey has decided to take a job with the private sector in Louisville. She will be assisting KCDHH as she can until her replacement can be hired. She will be greatly missed.

**KCDHH GOALS**

**KCDHH Goal I: Improve, strengthen and develop services, including human and communication services.**

***Deaf Access Stations at Kentucky School for the Deaf:***

Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) students learned Swedish Sign Language via videoconferencing. KCDHH introduced videoconferencing through the KCDHH satellite office in Lee Hall, as an educational tool on the KSD campus. This office utilizes a private line through Adelphia cable in Danville. High speed lines throughout the KSD campus are not capable at this point to run videoconferencing; however, through the use of the KCDHH satellite office students are able to connect with other schools, instructors and peers.

On December 21, 2005, the first opportunity for students to experience the educational use of videoconferencing came when the middle and elementary students hooked up with Jennifer Harris. Jennifer Harris is currently an exchange student at the school for the deaf in Sweden. The impact of peer to peer interaction by these students and Jennifer was immeasurable. Jennifer educated the students on Swedish Sign Language and deaf culture in Sweden. This prompted a flurry of questions and dialogue among all of the students.

#### **Access Center Assignments**

<b>Requests</b>	<b>Filled Assignments that occurred 10/1/05-12/31/05</b>	<b>Cancelled Assignments that would have occurred 10/1/05-12/31/05</b>	<b>Interpreting Hours Provided 10/1/05-12/31/05</b>	<b>Average number of contacts required to fill assignments</b>
AC: Request for Interpreting	48	1	642	14
AC: Request for Captioning	0	0	0	0
AC: Request for Videoconferencing	0	0	0	0

#### ***National Certification Opportunities***

As a Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Super site, the KCDHH hosted ten performance evaluations over a seven-day period this quarter. The dates were October 21, November 7, November 14, November 21, December 9, December 20 and December 21, 2005. Seventeen persons were given the written test on December 3, 2005.

#### **TDD Distribution Program**

<b>Request</b>	<b>Applicants Receiving Equipment</b>	<b>Pieces of equipment Distributed</b>
TDD: Applying for STE	224	331

The TDD Distribution Program Advisory Board met on October 18, 2005. The main items discussed were proposed legislative and regulatory changes and a demonstration of a TeleTalk device for speech impaired individuals. (See enclosed minutes)

The Program Coordinator and TTY Assistant have diligently worked to archive (in-house) ten years worth of TDD Distribution Program files. It was decided to keep these files in-house instead of sending them off-site for easier access since they are used on a regular basis.

BellSouth did an insert in their November and December phone bill mailings that explained about the TDD Distribution Program. Every time they do these inserts, KCDHH experiences a great increase in the number of calls for applications for specialized telecommunications equipment, predominately from older hard of hearing Kentuckians.

## **KCDHH Goal II: Serve as a clearinghouse of current information for state and national resources to provide appropriate information and referral services.**

### **Office of Information Services**

#### ***Information Technology***

Two new printers were ordered and installed since the old ones were continuously breaking down and causing disruption in service and using too much information technology staff time in trying to resolve the problems.

Workstations were updated in a variety of ways mostly involving security issues such as updating the workstation operating systems with Microsoft security patches, anti-spyware software, etc.

KCDHH staff has been very involved in a series of meetings in November and December headed by Ms. Ann Riggs, the Information Technology Officer for the Education Cabinet. The purpose of the meetings was to develop a proposal to submit a joint budget request for money for a statewide education network and a comparison of the available contracts. Other Education information technology staff has also been involved. Personnel from Commonwealth Office of Technology were also available to evaluate the technical aspects of the contracts and associated networking capabilities, with the end result that the technical specifications for each contract/network were equivalent.

#### **Web**

The KCDHH staff worked on improving the content, presentation and navigation of the KCDHH web pages. This was a major overhaul. Individuals are encouraged to visit the new website and the staff hopes that visitors are able to find what they need more easily. The new web pages were uploaded on December 15, 2005.

#### **Web Hits Counter**

Month	KCDHH Home Page	Access Center Home Page	IRA Home Page	TDD Distribution Home Page	DeaFestival Home Page	Publications Home Page
October	1342	74	310	219	570	97
November	1280	117	289	236	656	97
December	1222	301	455	242	444	84
Total	3844	492	1054	697	1670	275

## *Information and Referral Requests*

The IRA recorded 1016 requests from October 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005.

Nature	Closed Requests	Incomplete Requests	Pending Requests	Incoming Contacts	Outgoing Contacts	Mass Distribution
OAS: Administration	5	0	0	4	7	0
OEA: Administration	4	0	0	4	5	0
OEA: AC: DAS	5	0	1	7	5	0
OEA: AC: Evaluations	25	0	2	53	0	0
OEA: AC: Outreach	0	0	0	0	0	55
OEA: AC: Request for Captioner	0	0	0	0	0	0
OEA: AC: Request for Interpreter	48	1	1	210	432	0
OEA: TTY: Applying for STE	378	0	2	414	379	0
OEA: TTY: Outreach	2	0	0	6	5	277
OEA: TTY: Repair	11	0	0	14	13	0
OEA: TTY: Request for Application	232	29	115	405	671	0
OEA: TTY: Status Check	1	0	0	1	1	0
OIS: DeaFestival	2	0	9	11	4	0
OIS: Library	8	0	0	8	10	107
OIS: Outreach	2	0	0	1	1	144
OIS: IRA: ASL & Linguistics	7	0	0	10	14	0
OIS: IRA: Deafness & Hearing Loss	13	0	0	12	26	0
OIS: IRA: Demographics & Statistics	5	0	0	5	5	0
OIS: IRA: Education	4	0	0	3	4	0
OIS: IRA: Employment	1	0	0	0	1	0
OIS: IRA: Families & Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
OIS: IRA: Human Services	30	0	0	30	39	0
OIS: IRA: Interpreting	6	0	0	8	4	0
OIS: IRA: Legal Rights of Deaf & HOH	17	1	4	32	70	0
OIS: IRA: Technology	13	0	2	17	18	0
OIS: PUB: Agency Brochure	3	0	0	3	4	174
OIS: PUB: Communicator	9	0	0	7	9	0
OIS: PUB: Directory of Services	16	0	0	11	16	0
OIS: PUB: Interpreter Directory	1	0	1	2	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>1278</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>757</b>

## ***General KCDHH Outreach***

On October 21, 2005, the Program Coordinator provided outreach in the form of a presentation to 25 Senior Citizens and four other members of the Shelbyville Community. The presentation was focused on the duties and responsibilities of KCDHH and the TDD Distribution Program. Handouts were provided and questions were answered. Many participants were interested where they could get free hearing aids or free hearing screenings. The equipment available through the TDD Distribution Program was appropriate for several of the attendees and applications were provided and explained for those who were interested. Staff at the senior center took information to share with others who use their services.

On October 27, 2005, the Program Coordinator and the TTY Specialist provided outreach in the form of a booth at two Veterans Administration Medical Center facilities in Lexington. Information about the TDD Distribution Program, general information about the Commission, and Directories of Services were disseminated. The presentations were done at the request of Ms. Connie Dotson during the VA Medical Center's Disability Awareness Day and a total of approximately 45 people attended the events.

On November 9, 2005, the Program Coordinator and the TTY Specialist provided training on how to use and operate a TDD for Help Desk contacts (call center) at the United Way of the Bluegrass. They now have a hotline and purchased a device for incoming calls and referrals. Help Desk staff and the manager were trained on how to use the device, possible language differences, basic TDD etiquette and sensitivity. During the course of the training, it was determined that they needed a direct connect TDD. They will ask the Commission to come back once they have the correct TDD.

On November 17, 2005, the Program Coordinator attended the Louisville Deaf Senior Citizens Thanksgiving luncheon and answered questions about the TDD program and eligibility requirements.

On November 18, 2005, the TTY Specialist and the Information Coordinator had a booth at the Kentucky School for the Deaf Pancake Breakfast. Publications were disseminated about various KCDHH programs and general information. Approximately 20-30 people visited the booth.

**KCDHH Goal III: Initiate and advise the development of public policy and systems change efforts in cooperation with the Governor, General Assembly, public and private entities and local, state and federal governments.**

***Staff attended:***

On October 3, 2005, the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Cabinet Legislative Liaison meeting in Frankfort with Ms. Stacy Bassett, the Education Cabinet's Legislative Liaison. Each agency gave a brief overview of their expected legislative pursuits and priority items, a brief review of pre-filed bills, possible collaborative efforts and feedback/input regarding the process for the upcoming legislative session.

On October 4, 2005, the Network Analyst assisted Vocational Rehabilitation's Central Office in testing their line speed for videoconferencing to determine if the problem they were experiencing was related to equipment or line speed. A subsequent test on October 21, 2005 revealed that the equipment needed to be upgraded.

On October 5, 2005, the Executive Director and Executive Secretary attended the Kentucky Assistive Technology System Network meeting in Louisville. Items discussed were approval of bylaws, nomination and election of officers, Assistive Technology Act program update, Help America Vote Act grant activities update, Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation overview, Protection and Advocacy priorities under the Assistive Technology Act, the status of Medicaid related issues, overviews of operations at assistive technology resource centers and a tour of the enTECH Assistive Technology Center.

On October 6, 2005, the Executive Director and the Executive Secretary participated in a teleconference with the Public Service Commission staff to share information regarding increasing the TDD Distribution program funding from one-cent per access line to two-cents per access line and the name change of the program. Methods to accomplish the increased funding were discussed such as legislation and/or petitioning the Public Service Commission for a change in the funding mechanism to include wireless carriers.

On October 7, 2005, the Kentucky Board of Interpreters Subcommittee met to discuss regulatory changes that are needed regarding temporary and full licensure. This subcommittee subsequently met on October 25, October 28 and took their recommendations to the full Kentucky Board of Interpreters the same day. The Board requested that the subcommittee meet with the Board attorney to put the changes into regulatory language and to include requirements on ethics training. The Subcommittee met with the Board attorney on December 5, met independently to get consensus on ethics training on December 14 and met with the Board attorney once more on December 16, 2005. A draft of the regulatory changes was done and will be submitted to the full Board at their January 9, 2006 meeting.

On October 10, 2005, Ms. Paula Breeden, a former state employee who specialized in inventory came to work with KCDHH on contract to assist with inventory. This has been a long process

because of the conversion from an in-house record-keeping system to the Fixed Assets portion of the MARS system that the state uses. There are specific requirements that have to be followed in order to be in compliance with the state and there was no in-house expertise in this area. She will work with KCDHH through the end of March before the new version of MARS begins so that the conversion to the new version is seamless.

On October 14, 2005, the Executive Staff Advisor and the Program Coordinator met with Ms. Nancy Jarett from BellSouth in Shelbyville to discuss the possibility of including interpreters and captioners in BellSouth telephone directories so that the public has easier access to this information. Several options were discussed and she promised to get back to KCDHH with what BellSouth could do to assist.

On October 19, 2005, the Program Coordinator attended the final report meeting at the Education Cabinet office for the Kentucky Employee Charitable Campaign. KCDHH staff surpassed their goal and gave \$1,699 to the fundraiser. Some of those funds were designated to go to the Knowledge Center on Deafness in support of deaf and hard of hearing related activities throughout the year.

On October 20, 2005, the Network Analyst went to Kentucky School for the Deaf to test line speed between Kerr Hall and Lee Hall for the purpose of videoconferencing quality. This was done again on December 1, 2005 before it was resolved.

On October 24, 2005, KCDHH staff submitted the 2006-2008 Biennial Budget Request to the Education Cabinet to roll up with the other Education Cabinet agencies' budgets and to await ranking assignments for additional budget requests.

On November 8, 2005, the Executive Director and Program Coordinator met with Mr. Greg Coker from the Public Service Commission. Mr. Coker had recently been appointed to the national Telephone Relay Service Committee and he wanted general information about the TDD Distribution program to assist him in his duties on that committee.

On November 12, 2005, the Interpreter Administrator and the Program Coordinator attended the second annual Kentucky Storytelling Conference at Greenbo State Park as part of a partnership between KCDHH and the Kentucky Storytelling Association (KSA). Participants learned to work with sign language interpreters and one deaf storyteller, Mr. Jeff Carroll, offered a breakout session on art and its influence. KSA is very willing to include deaf artists/storytellers in their events and plans to request funding for interpreters for all upcoming events.

On November 17, 2005, the Executive Director attended the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Steering Committee Meeting in Frankfort. At this meeting, they discussed doing a survey and who should receive it, demographics and participants gave input into the wording of the survey. A subsequent meeting of this group was held on December 15, 2005, and it was decided that it would be disseminated to all eligible Medicaid Buy In constituents in Kentucky and the survey



dissemination process was discussed as well as timeframes and desired results. The verbiage was also refined.

On November 28, 2005, the Executive Director met and Ms. Sally Hamilton from the Education Cabinet met with Ms. Regina Crawford from the Governor's Office about the Kentucky Board of Interpreters for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing seats to discuss the consumer seat on the board.

On November 30, 2005, the Information Coordinator represented the Executive Director at the Mental Health Advisory Committee retreat in Frankfort. The goal for Part I of the retreat was for the group to identify the main challenges within mental health for deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians. The challenges were identified as coordinated statewide services, continuum of residential care (cradle to grave), identifying specific gaps in services and advocacy and empowerment through education. The second part of the retreat will be held in January.

On December 1, 2005, the Program Coordinator attended the Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation Interagency Coordinating Committee meeting in Frankfort. Participants were from various state and local agencies dealing with disabilities. Presentations were given by Ms. Carol Estes and Ms. Milton Tyre regarding improvements in Supportive Employment. Members were asked to support BR 71, a bill that would allow those in supportive employment to exclude funds in an individual retirement account, allowing them to continue to draw SSI. Legislation from the Association for Persons involved in Supportive Employment (APSE) will also be introduced which will ask for additional funding to support new activities geared to make individuals more self sufficient with individualized placement. Members were pleased to learn of the posting of legislative voting records during the 2006 session.

On December 5, 2005, the Program Coordinator attended the BellSouth Consumer Advisory Panel meeting in Louisville. Tips were given on how to get protection from cyber grins, scams and schemes when shopping on-line and protection from telephone and Internet fraud and reducing telephone solicitations. Statistics were given for Voice-Over IP and landlines and the issue the changing residential telecom customer was discussed. Moving toward a consumer-driven telecom marketplace was also discussed and a wireless update was provided. The partnership that KCDHH and BellSouth have regarding an addition to their Consumer Guide pages with regard to interpreters and captioners was announced.

On December 6, 2005, the Administrative Assistant attended Procard Administrators Users Meeting regarding changes with the state credit card. The state will change banks and agencies will be issued new credit cards.

On December 6, 2005, the Executive Staff Advisor had a teleconference with Ms. Shannon Grider, President of Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf concerning proposed language for an insert in the Consumer Guide pages of the BellSouth telephone directories. A draft was presented to the Executive Board for review.

On December 8, 2005, the Interpreter Referral Specialist provided deaf/hard of hearing awareness training to Kentucky State Police recruits in Frankfort. Other topics were deaf culture, basic signs, communicating with hard of hearing people, laws regarding access for deaf and hard of hearing persons and services that KCDHH provides.

On December 8, 2005, the Executive Director had a teleconference with Ms. Artie Grassman and a group in Clarksville, Tennessee who are trying to get a community service center started there that would also serve parts of western Kentucky.

**KCDHH Goal IV: Empower constituents by providing leadership, training, advocacy, educational and awareness programs and services.**

***DeaFestival***

BellSouth as the sole ongoing sponsor affords DeaFestival the ability to showcase technology and create new opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing performers. As all are painfully aware the Katrina Hurricane changed lives and affected everyone in different ways. The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) experienced this when the hotel which was to host their national conference in 2006 was irreparable. NAD was forced to change locations and the date of their national conference. The conference will be held on June 28-July 3, 2006 in Palm Springs, California overlapping DeaFestival on July 1, 2006. NAD and KCDHH tried to avoid the date conflict however it was out of everyone's control. With BellSouth's assistance, KCDHH will turn an unfortunate situation into an opportunity for attendees to experience both conferences through videoconferencing. Together KCDHH and NAD will develop programming to connect performers and artists from both conferences.

Sponsorship for DeaFestival proves to be difficult due to the climate of need throughout the United States. However, innovative programming and the need for fellowship, togetherness and normalcy which DeaFestival provides, allows us to still effectively fundraise. Proposals to Hamilton Relay and the Kentucky Arts Council are currently being considered.

**KCDHH Goal V: Improve support of people in our organization to create a work environment that fosters productivity and innovation.**

On October 10-11, 2005, the Information Coordinator attended the Equal Employment Opportunity Conference in Louisville. Various sessions were provided focusing on equal access rights in the area of employment. How to file complaints with the Human Rights Commission, which laws covered this topic, etc. were shared.

On October 17, 2005, the staff honored the Network Analyst's birthday by going to Waffle House for lunch.

On October 19, 2005, the Interpreter Administrator attended the Kentucky Arts Council Technology Conference in Frankfort. Most of the discussion centered on the ability to use technology to reach out to those artists and performers in rural areas. Participants were asked to share our technological uses with the group. The Interpreter Administrator shared that KCDHH is using videoconferencing to connect deaf and hard of hearing artists. As a result of the meeting connections were made with the Cooperative Extension Services in Pike County. They want to assist KCDHH in finding a location for a deaf access station in eastern Kentucky. Other networking opportunities were with the Center for Rural Development and the Center for Economic Development with ECU.

On October 20, 2005, the KCDHH staff (and all other employees of the Education Cabinet) received a flyer from the Cabinet thanking them for their service in recognition of Public Employees Appreciation Week.

On October 24-27, 2005, the Executive Interpreter attended the annual Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness in Asheville, North Carolina. This conference had an array of workshops with topics mainly focusing on the issues of DeafBlindness and technology for this population and how to have a better quality of life, Low Functioning Deaf or "Deaf at Risk" and interpreting for this population and working with this population in terms of employment, and emergency warning systems to the deaf and hard of hearing population. Other topics included transition, ethics in mental health, minority and outreach services and dealing with progressive hearing loss. The Executive Interpreter attended workshops pertaining to issues of interest to the KCDHH including "Emergency Alert and Response: Working with Existing Systems," "Dealing with Progressive Hearing Loss," Psychological Aspects of Late Deafened Adults" and others.

On October 26, 2005, staff was treated to lunch at Long Horn's Steak House by the Executive Director in honor of Public Employee Appreciation Week. Staff agreed that this year's event was the best of all other staff appreciation events.

On October 26, 2005, the Executive Director, Program Coordinator and TTY Specialist attended the Kentucky Employee Charitable Campaign Victory Celebration recognizing agencies for donations to various charity organizations. The Education Cabinet met their overall goal which was a 35% increase over last year and KCDHH exceeded its goal for contributions this year. This was quite a feat for staff!

On November 1-2, 2005, KCDHH staff provided a New Staff Orientation to Mr. John Barnes, the new Information Systems Supervisor. The main items included were history of the agency, overviews of all programs and agency documents (manuals/reports), sensitivity and videoconferencing training.

On November 2, 2005, the Executive Director attended the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing to examine the 2000 position statement on infant hearing and to draft a 2005 position statement

on infant hearing. This took place in Frederick, Maryland. (Bobbie Beth – please add more.)

On November 1-4, 2005, the Executive Staff Advisor and Ms. Betty Timon, Vice-Chair of the Commission attended the Accessible Emergency Notification and Communication Conference sponsored by Gallaudet University. It was an amazing conference with presentations by FEMA, WGBH National Center for Accessible Media, Ultratec, Gallaudet's Technology Access Program, Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons, National Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network Coalition, the Federal Communications Commission, Sorenson, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, Department of Homeland Security as well as many others. Information gathered at this conference will be used to develop a study group proposal on a similar topic for the Commission. For speeches and other resource information, go to <http://tap.gallaudet.edu/EmergencyCommConf>.

On November 11-13, 2005, the Executive Director attended the National Association of the Deaf Region II Conference in Nebraska. (Bobbie Beth – please add more here.)

On November 15-16, 2005, the Information Systems Supervisor attended a workshop entitled, "Leading and Coaching High Performance Teams" which was put on by the Office for Employee and Organizational Development in Frankfort. This class taught participants techniques for improving teamwork and cooperation in a work environment and how to recognize different personalities in groups and how to cope with the differences with the aim of improving team cohesiveness and collaboration.

On November 28, 2005, staff gave a farewell party to the Executive Secretary at a local Mexican restaurant. A gift certificate to J. Crew was given to her as a going away gift.

On December 1, 2005, the Information Systems Supervisor attended a workshop entitled, "Effective Presentation Skills" which was put on by the Office of Employee and Organizational Development in Frankfort. Participants were taught the necessary skills to organize and give effective presentations. Emphasis was on clarity and using appropriate language and visual aids.

On December 5, 2005, the Information Coordinator began an on-line course through Self Help for Hard of Hearing (Hearing Loss Association of American) entitled, "the Standard Class." She has received the five books that are the course materials and it will be fully self-paced.

On December 19, 2005, the staff had a Christmas party with the Executive Board members after the Executive Board meeting. It was enjoyable for everyone.

On December 21, 2005, the Information Systems Supervisor attended a workshop entitled, "Performance Matters." This training is required of all new supervisors to ensure they are familiar with the legal requirements of completing performance plans, interim reviews and year end evaluations on staff that they supervise.

On December 27, 2005, the staff went to Panera Bread in honor of Ms. Margie Bridges' birthday. Ms. Bridges works with the TDD Distribution Program through temporary services.